

Preface

The present Regulatory Framework of Ethics is a product of systematic scientific Study of Best International Practices in combination with the Codes of Conduct of IFG (International Federation of Journalists), POESY (Pan-Hellenic Federation of Journalists' Unions) and ESIEA (Journalists' Union of Athens Daily Newspapers) by a special committee that was established following the decision of the board of POESY. Mr. Spyridon Vlachopoulos, professor of the Law School of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, was appointed President of the Committee, Dr. Andreas M. Panagopoulos, the Organizing Secretary of POESY and journalist, was appointed coordinator, and Dr. Vassilis Vassilopoulos, journalist, Mr. Aris Vrachatis, assistant professor, Mr. Nikos Eleftheroglou, PhD candidate and journalist, Ms. Valia Kaimaki, assistant professor, Mr. Spyridon Tassis, lawyer, Ms. Maria Tsipra, the Legal Advisor of POESY, were appointed members.

Bibliographical Reference: Vlachopoulos Spyros, Vassilopoulos Vassilis, Vrachatis Aris, Eleftheroglou Nikos, Kaimaki Valia, Panagopoulos M. Andreas, Tassis Spiros, Tsipra Maria (2025). Code of Conduct for the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence by Journalists. POESY.

Preamble of the Code of Conduct for the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence by Journalists

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) constitutes a tool that can upgrade significantly the potential of journalism, facilitating the faster analysis of data, the production of diverse content and the enhancement of narration. However, this powerful computational technology introduces crucial ethical challenges.

The present Code of Conduct aims at guiding journalists regarding the responsible and ethical use of creative AI.

It aims at ensuring that AI will be used as a tool that enhances the accuracy, the objectivity and the reliability of journalism, **without undermining** its fundamental principles. The journalists that use tools of creative AI ought to prioritize public interest, to maintain the public's trust and to ensure that their work is verified, transparent and committed to accountability.

Basic Principles for the Use of AI in Journalism

Transparency: To make clear to the readers when and how AI is used.

Human supervision: To always ensure human oversight and editing of the content produced using AI.

Accuracy and reliability: To ensure that the information provided is accurate and reliable, given the fact that Artificial Intelligence does not constitute the primary source of information.

Justice and equality: To avoid discriminatory effects and reinforcing of stereotypes and bias.

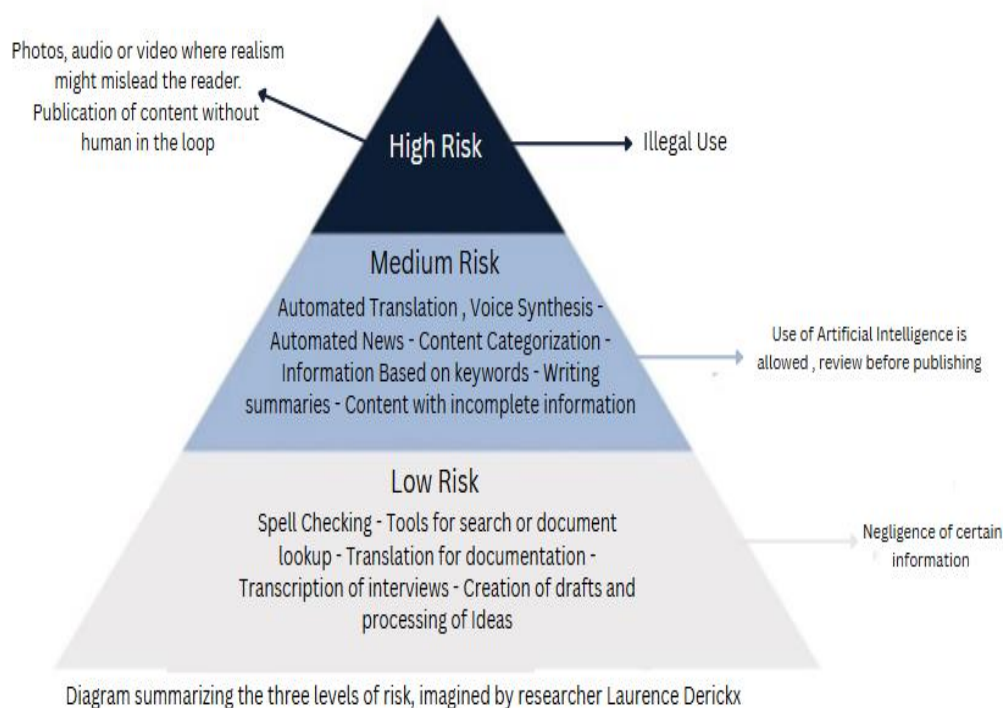
Protection of private life: To comply with the data protection and privacy regulatory framework.

Creativity and innovation: To make good use of AI's potential to develop new forms of journalism.

Protection of intellectual property: For the editors to demonstrate due care and diligence, when creative artificial intelligence uses content that may have not been licensed by its owner.

Many large news organizations, on an international level, are adopting their own standards for using Generative AI ethically, but there are still no uniform rules for all journalists. The EU, with the EU AI Act, has adopted rules on the use of AI by enterprises. Its reflection on the profession of journalists and the cases of transparency are described in the following diagram, which was created by the French Council for Ethical Journalism and Mediation (CDJM – Conseil de Déontologie Journalistique et de Médiation).

Diagram summarizing the three levels of risk, as imagined by researcher Laurence Dierickx.



The present Code will be revised, as AI technology is progressing. Maintaining an open dialogue and adapting to new challenges is of utmost importance.

The aim is to create an environment, where AI will function as a powerful tool for the enhancement of democracy and for providing reliable information to the public.

Code of Conduct for the use of Generative AI in Journalism

1. Journalism Ethics serve as a compass on how to make good use of AI (art. 1 of the Code of Conduct of POESY, art. 1 of the Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists, art. 11, 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union).

a. AI cannot replace the journalist and their role to inform the public, providing quality and reliable information based on truth.

b. AI can constitute a tool solely for supporting the fulfilment of the aforementioned primary mission of journalists. The pursuance and accomplishment of this aim must guide their choices with regard to technological tools.

c. The use and development of artificial intelligence systems must support the basic values of journalism ethics, including truth and accuracy, transparency, fairness, impartiality, independence, non-harm, non-discrimination, accountability, respect for private life, and confidentiality of sources.

2. Participation in AI governance (art. 2 of the Code of Conduct of POESY, art. 9 and 10 of the Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists).

a. As the primary guardians of the right to information, the journalists, and their Trade Unions must play an active role in the governance of AI systems and in any institutional oversight of AI governance and regulation.

b. Journalists must ensure that AI governance respects the democratic values and that human and cultural diversity is reflected in the development of AI.

c. Journalists ought to claim their participation in the creation of AI tools developed by the Media, for which they work, in order for the values of journalism to be taken into consideration during the creation of those tools.

3. Training on the use of AI and continuous awareness.

Journalists ought to avoid, in their everyday work practice, the use of AI tools, on which they have not been trained, and to claim their right to remain at the forefront of knowledge in the AI domain.

4. Editorial responsibility (art. 1 of the Code of Conduct of POESY, art. 1, 2 and 6 of the Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists).

a. Journalists, bearing the editorial responsibility, including for the use of AI for the collection, processing or diffusion of information, are responsible and accountable for any content they publish. The responsibilities related to the use of artificial intelligence systems must be provided for, described and delegated to people, in order to ensure the adherence to journalism ethics and editorial guidelines.

b. AI-generated content shall be treated by the journalist as non-verified; it must be checked and cross-checked.

c. Journalists are responsible for the accuracy of information transmission and ought to apply all the best professional practices before publishing any AI-created content.

d. Given the fact that the journalist publishes information whose sources they are aware of , it is essential to search in depth to the extent possible the sources used by AI.

5. Transparency and accountability regarding the use of AI (art. 1 of the Code of Conduct of POESY, art. 2 of the Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists).

a. Journalists must opt for the use of authentic material and recordings for the depiction of real events. In any case, they ought to ensure the clear and reliable distinction between the content deriving from the physical depiction of the real world (such as photographs, audio and video recordings) and of the world created or significantly modified through the use of AI systems.

b. The publication of AI-generated photographs, videos and any other multimedia content must be explicitly stated by journalists.

c. Journalists ought not to mislead the public when using AI technologies. More specifically, they must refrain from the creation or use of content generated by AI that mimics actual capturings and recordings or realistically portrays real persons.

d. Journalists ought not to accept the publication of forged and altered statements, photographs, videos and other AI representations and must respect the accurate use principle.

e. Journalists ought to always defend the principles of free, transparent compilation and publication of news and to be transparent towards the public when using AI tools, explicitly mentioning the type of content that has been created using AI.

f. Journalists ought to demonstrate due care and diligence and maintain a critical attitude regarding content verification, taking into consideration that creative AI facilitates even more the intentional dissemination of misinformation through altered text, photographs, video or sound, including content that may has no sign of alteration and may seem realistic and authentic.

g. Journalists are committed to informing the public about the developments in AI and its impact, with accuracy and critical spirit.

6. Confidentiality when using AI (art. 2 of the Code of Conduct of POESY, art. 8, 9, 10, 11 of the Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists).

a. Journalists, in the context of the protection of their sources, ought not to use confidential and sensitive data in widely used AI tools in order to ensure the confidentiality of the sources.

b. Journalists engaging in a process of AI models training or of creation of content with the use of personal data, must take into consideration the relevant legislation.

7. Impartiality and non-discrimination (art. 2 of the Code of Conduct of POESY, art. 1, 2 of the Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists).

Journalists, recognizing the fact that AI probably contains biased content, ought to monitor and ensure the non-dissemination of information or opinions that provoke hatred or prejudice. They shall endeavor to avoid discrimination spreading based on race, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, disability, political and other opinions, as well as national, social or ethnic origin.

8. Respect of the Rules of Conduct and intellectual property rights (art. 4 of the Code of Conduct of POESY, art. 12 of the Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists).

Journalists and their institutional bodies ought to demand from the owners of AI systems to mention their sources, to respect intellectual property rights and to provide fair compensation to intellectual property rights owners, including journalists. Intellectual property rights owners shall make the reuse of copyrighted content by AI systems conditional upon the respect of the integrity of information and of the fundamental principles of journalism ethics.

9. Ethical principles regarding the use of AI (art. 7b of the Code of Conduct of POESY).

Journalists ought to demand from the news organizations to use AI applications based on ethical guidelines, prioritizing public interest, pluralism of content and the value of journalism information, and demand the regular updating and review of AI systems for the purpose of improving their accuracy and ethical compliance.

10. Reporting and control mechanisms.

Journalists and their trade unions ought to seek the creation of Committees on Control and Ethical Review within the News Organizations in order to supervise the use of AI and to ensure that it is aligned with the ethics standards, while, at the same time, they ought to establish mechanisms for reporting and managing violations of the present Code of Conduct, and ensuring compliance with the Code through regular audits and revisions.